

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-44 (canceled)

45. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article, comprising:

a liquid-permeable layer;

a substantially liquid-impermeable layer; and

an absorbent body between the liquid-permeable layer and the substantially liquid-impermeable layer;

the absorbent body comprising a flowable absorbent material which is ~~nonswellable and remains able to flow up to a water absorption of after absorbing at least about 10.5 grams water per gram flowable absorbent material and absorbs said amount of water under conditions where no volume expansion is possible.~~

46. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 45, wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises absorbent particles.

47. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 46, wherein the absorbent particles comprise spherical particles.

48. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 46, wherein the absorbent particles have a diameter of about 100-2000 microns.

49. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 46, wherein the absorbent particles have a diameter of about 200-800 microns.

50. (Previously Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 45, wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises polymethylene urea.

51. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 50, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least about one third by weight of the flowable absorbent material.

52. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 50, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least about one half by weight of the flowable absorbent material.

53. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 50, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least about two thirds by weight of the flowable absorbent material.

54. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 50, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least about 80% by weight of the flowable absorbent material.

55. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 50, wherein the flowable absorbent material consists essentially of the polymethylene urea.

56. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 50, wherein the polymethylene urea is substantially free of ether groups and formaldehyde.

57. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 45, wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises a superabsorbent material.

58. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 57, wherein the superabsorbent material comprises a polyacrylate.

59. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 45, wherein the absorbent body further comprises a fibrous matrix, and the flowable absorbent material is disposed within the matrix.

60. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 45, wherein the absorbent body further comprises at least one care substance.

61. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 60, wherein the care substance comprises a material selected from extracts of aloe vera, marigold, chamomile, and combinations thereof.

62. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article, comprising:
a substantially liquid-impermeable layer;
an absorbent body connected to the substantially liquid-impermeable layer in a central region of the substantially liquid-impermeable layer; and
a liquid permeable layer over a side of the absorbent body opposite the substantially liquid-impermeable layer;
the absorbent body comprising a flowable absorbent material which is nonswellable and remains able to flow up to a water absorption of after absorbing at least about 10.5 grams water per gram flowable absorbent material and absorbs said amount of water under conditions where no volume expansion is possible.

63. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the absorbent body and substantially liquid-impermeable layer are connected using an adhesive.

64. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the absorbent body and substantially liquid-impermeable layer are connected using one or more seams.

65. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the absorbent body further comprises a secondary storage layer including a soft absorbent material.

66. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 65, wherein the soft absorbent material comprises a material selected from coform materials, airlaid materials, tissue cotton-wools, and combinations thereof.

67. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 65, wherein the soft absorbent material comprises a nonwoven material selected from spunbond fabrics, carded webs, and combinations thereof.

68. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the absorbent body further comprises a fibrous matrix, and the flowable absorbent material is disposed within the matrix.

69. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 68, wherein the flowable absorbent material is disposed substantially homogeneously within the matrix.

70. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the absorbent body further comprises two or more layers of a fibrous material, and the flowable absorbent material is disposed between the layers of fibrous material.

71. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 68, wherein the fibrous matrix comprises a material selected from cellulose, a cellulose/polypropylene mixture, a coform material, and combinations thereof.

72. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 70, wherein the two or more layers of fibrous material comprise a material selected from cellulose, a cellulose/polypropylene mixture, a coform material, and combinations thereof.

73. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 68, wherein the absorbent body comprises the fibrous material and flowable absorbent material in a weight ratio of about 99-75% fibrous material to about 1-25% flowable absorbent material.

74. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 73, wherein the weight ratio is about 95-80% fibrous material to about 5-20% flowable absorbent material.

75. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 73, wherein the weight ratio is about 90-85% fibrous material to about 10-15% flowable absorbent material.

76. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the absorbent body further comprises at least one care substance.

77. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 76, wherein the care substance comprises a material selected from extracts of aloe vera, marigold, chamomile, and combinations thereof.

78. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 76, wherein the care substance is enclosed in microcapsules.

79. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 78, wherein the care substance is releaseable from the microcapsules in response to heat or pressure.

80. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the flowable absorbent material is treated with a substance selected from bactericidal, fungicidal and viricidal substances, and combinations thereof.

81. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 80, wherein the substance comprises a bactericidal substance selected from chlorinated levulinic acid, alkyl dimethyl benzyl ammonium halogenides, and combinations thereof.

82. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the flowable absorbent material remains flowable after absorbing at least 10 ml liquid per gram of flowable absorbent material.

83. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises absorbent particles.

84. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 83, wherein the absorbent particles comprise spherical particles.

85. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 83, wherein the spherical particles have a diameter of about 100-2000 microns.

86. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 83, wherein the spherical particles have a diameter of about 200-800 microns.

87. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises polymethylene urea.

88. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 87, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least one third of the flowable absorbent material.

89. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 87, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least one half of the flowable absorbent material.

90. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 87, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least two thirds of the flowable absorbent material.

91. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 87, wherein the polymethylene urea constitutes at least 80% of the flowable absorbent material.

92. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 87, wherein the flowable absorbent material consists essentially of the polymethylene urea.

93. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 87, wherein the polymethylene urea is substantially free of ether groups and formaldehyde.

94. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the flowable absorbent material comprises a superabsorbent material.

95. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 94, wherein the superabsorbent material comprises a polyacrylate.

96. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62 having a length and a width, wherein the absorbent body comprises at least one core which contains the flowable absorbent material, the core having a length that is less than or equal to the length of the absorbent article, and a width that is less than or equal to the width of the absorbent article.

97. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, wherein the absorbent body comprises at least two chambers, and at least one wall between the chambers.

98. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 97, wherein the wall is aligned in a longitudinal direction of the absorbent article.

99. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 97, wherein the wall is aligned in a transverse direction of the absorbent article.

100. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 97, comprising at least one wall aligned in a longitudinal direction of the absorbent article and at least one wall aligned in a transverse direction of the absorbent article.

101. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 96, wherein the core comprises a plurality of chambers.

102. (Currently Amended) A hygiene article, comprising:
a liquid-permeable layer;
a substantially liquid-impermeable layer; and
an absorbent body between the liquid-permeable layer and the substantially liquid-impermeable layer;
the absorbent body comprising a flowable absorbent material which is nonswellable and remains able to flow up to a water absorption of after absorbing at least about 10.5 grams water per gram flowable absorbent material and absorbs said amount of water under conditions where no volume expansion is possible.

103. (Previously Added) The hygiene article of Claim 102, comprising a feminine hygiene article.

104. (Previously Added) The hygiene article of Claim 102, comprising a sanitary napkin.

105. (Previously Added) The hygiene article of Claim 102, comprising a panty liner.

106. (Previously Added) The hygiene article of Claim 102, wherein the liquid-permeable layer comprises a central aperture.

107. (Previously Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 45, comprising a diaper.

108. (Previously Amended) The absorbent article of Claim 45, comprising an incontinence pad.

109. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, comprising a feminine hygiene article.

110. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62, comprising a diaper.

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111. (Previously Added) The absorbent article of Claim 62,
comprising an incontinence pad.
